2020 Worldbuilder's Checklist

WORLDBUILDING
MAGAZINE

THE NATURAL WORLD
- ☐ Stars, constellations, suns, moons, and planets
- ☐ Overall size of the world
- ☐ Mountains, woods, and/or other prominent features of the landscape
- ☐ Oceans and/or major bodies of water
- ☐ Common and rare plants
- ☐ Common and rare animals/creatures
- ☐ Poisonous and/or medicinal flora & fauna
- ☐ Invasive or synthetic species

RACES & SPECIES
- ☐ Common and uncommon races and/or species
- ☐ Dynamics between species and/or races
- ☐ Cultural similarities or disconnects between species and/or races
- ☐ Species commonly kept as pets
- ☐ Species used for industry
- ☐ Social opinions regarding various races/species

WEATHER & CLIMATE
- ☐ Typical and atypical weather
- ☐ Seasonal variations in weather
- ☐ Atmospheric phenomena
- ☐ Natural disasters *(and places prone to them)*
- ☐ Social opinions regarding weather

MAGIC
- ☐ Access to magic
- ☐ Access to education in magic
- ☐ Prevalence of magic users
- ☐ Restrictions on magic
- ☐ Common and rare magical skills
- ☐ Common and rare potions
- ☐ Restrictions on potions
- ☐ Requirements of using magic
- ☐ Magic's relationship to science
- ☐ Magical flora & fauna
- ☐ Magical reactions/illnesses
- ☐ Black market or forbidden magic
- ☐ Social opinions toward magic

TECHNOLOGY
- ☐ Availability of technology
- ☐ Access to education in technology
- ☐ Capabilities of technology
- ☐ Entertainment technology
- ☐ Energy production technology
- ☐ Transportation technology
- ☐ Inventions that change how society functions
- ☐ Advancements in medicine
- ☐ Black market technology
- ☐ Social opinions toward advancing and/or aging technology

CARTOGRAPHY
- ☐ Topographical, political. Elevation, or other types of maps
- ☐ Known or skilled cartographers
- ☐ Restrictions to cartography/limits of the known world

From where did your world's races originate? Is there a cradle of civilization?

LOCATIONS

- ☐ Natural formations
- ☐ Landmarks
- ☐ Government buildings/castles
- ☐ Transportation hubs/major pathways
- ☐ Places for shopping
- ☐ Houses/apartments
- ☐ Towns and cities
- ☐ National boundaries
- ☐ Places with positive/negative opinions toward them

TRAVEL

- ☐ Restrictions on travel *(societal and/or geographical)*
- ☐ Dangerous locations
- ☐ Luxury/vacation locations
- ☐ Immigration/emigration trends
- ☐ Common methods of travel
- ☐ Affordability and access to travel
- ☐ Social opinions toward travel and travel methods

PROFESSIONS

- ☐ Common and rare professions
- ☐ Specialized professions
- ☐ Social or actual restrictions on professions
- ☐ Unemployment rates
- ☐ Social opinions toward various jobs

FAMILY

- ☐ Marriage customs
- ☐ Typical age of marriage
- ☐ Typical number of children
- ☐ Availability and opinions toward birth control
- ☐ Typical family dynamic/structure
- ☐ Attitudes towards romantic love and sex
- ☐ Attitudes towards children and the elderly
- ☐ Care for children *(parenting, nannies, boarding school, etc.)*
- ☐ Care for the elderly (in-home, nursing homes, etc.)
- ☐ Typical gender roles, or lack thereof
- ☐ Importance of birth order to family roles, inheritance, etc.
- ☐ Social opinions toward families

EDUCATION

- ☐ Availability of schooling/education
- ☐ Cost and other restrictions on education
- ☐ Typical education level
- ☐ School subjects
- ☐ School environment *(strict, lenient, etc.)*
- ☐ Societal or other outside influences on education
- ☐ Social opinions toward education

LANGUAGE

- ☐ Primary/major languages
- ☐ Regional/minor languages
- ☐ Prevalence of multilingual/bilingual people
- ☐ Colloquial phrases, slang, and curses
- ☐ Unconventional or unusual languages
- ☐ Naming conventions/rules
- ☐ Social opinions toward different languages

SOCIETAL ORDER

- ☐ Social structure
- ☐ Members of the highest levels of society
- ☐ Social mobility, or lack thereof
- ☐ Social norms and values

Does your world contain any unique jobs? What do they contribute/provide?

☐ Sense of individuality and equality
☐ Slavery and servitude
☐ Treatment of the dead
☐ Social opinions toward current forms of societal norms

ART
☐ Access to galleries
☐ Access to supplies or lessons
☐ Affordability of supplies or commissions
☐ Who is commissioning work
☐ Trends in architecture, sculpture, painting, literature, film, or other media
☐ Influence on society
☐ Famous artists and works
☐ Social opinions toward art

CLOTHING
☐ Cheap and expensive fabrics
☐ Differences in clothing styles between economical classes
☐ Uniforms and functional clothing styles
☐ Seasonal wear
☐ Differences in clothing between genders
☐ Differences in clothing between regions
☐ Differences in clothing between cultural groups or species
☐ Social opinions toward clothing styles

ENTERTAINMENT
☐ Restrictions on entertainment
☐ Affordability or access to films/sports/instruments/books, etc.
☐ Professional and casual sports
☐ Board games and/or card games
☐ Music and instruments

☐ Common themes and subjects in fiction
☐ Printed entertainment/digital media
☐ Humor and comedy preferences
☐ Social opinions toward entertainment

FOOD
☐ Staple foods
☐ Luxury foods
☐ Availability of food
☐ Local/regional dishes
☐ Foreign foods
☐ Unique diets of different peoples
☐ Social opinions toward different diets

ARCHITECTURE & INFRASTRUCTURE
☐ Common and rare or expensive building materials
☐ Appearance and layout of typical/expensive houses
☐ Appearance and layout of typical shops/markets
☐ Streets and sidewalks *(brick, cobblestone, dirt, etc.)*
☐ Availability of plumbing/sewage/snow removal/garbage collection, etc.

ECONOMY
☐ Distribution of wealth
☐ Lifestyle of the poor and rich
☐ Lifestyle of average income earners
☐ Money or bartering systems
☐ Currency conversions
☐ Resources in excess or at a deficit
☐ Opinion of wealth among various cultures
☐ Social opinions toward the economy

RELIGION

- ☐ Major religions
- ☐ Origin of religion
- ☐ Prevalence of religion
- ☐ Places of worship, or lack thereof
- ☐ Structure, or lack thereof, within each religion
- ☐ Dynamics between religious groups
- ☐ Dynamics between religious and secular groups
- ☐ Creation myths and theogony
- ☐ Religious holidays and days of worship
- ☐ Morals and beliefs
- ☐ Social opinions toward religion

HISTORY

- ☐ The age of civilization and/or recorded history
- ☐ Major world events
- ☐ Social revolutions *(i.e. the industrial revolution)*
- ☐ Previous leaders/rulers
- ☐ Recent cultural shifts/changes
- ☐ Monuments
- ☐ Forgotten, hidden, or incorrectly recorded history
- ☐ Social opinions toward history

LAW

- ☐ Laws impacting daily life
- ☐ Common sentences for crimes
- ☐ Police behavior, uniform, practices
- ☐ Criminal justice system
- ☐ Fundamental rights
- ☐ Major and minor crimes
- ☐ Prison conditions
- ☐ Recidivism rates
- ☐ Corruption in the judiciary system
- ☐ Social opinions toward law enforcement

POLITICS

- ☐ Form of government
- ☐ Current leader *(and how they came to power)*
- ☐ Political parties or factions within government
- ☐ Prominent members of court and/or government
- ☐ Secret government agencies and/or organizations
- ☐ Influence of religion on government
- ☐ Access to news and freedom of the press
- ☐ Rebel or resistance groups against the current leader(s)
- ☐ Social opinions toward government and its leaders

WARFARE

- ☐ Offensive and defensive technology or magic
- ☐ Famous battle strategies
- ☐ Famous generals, conquerors, and tacticians
- ☐ Allies and enemies of each nation
- ☐ Methods of acquiring soldiers
- ☐ Hiring mercenaries
- ☐ Social opinions toward war and soldiers

BONUS: YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is a 3-6 sentence description that conveys the interesting relevant ideas on a topic that can be said in 30-60 seconds. Why bother with this? It's commonly said that within 7 seconds a person has formed first impressions. Explaining an idea to someone requires grabbing their interest quickly, and without confusing them, or risk losing it.

Try writing an elevator pitch for your world, then test it out on somebody!